

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 683
By Kisber

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach David Blackstock and the 1997-1998 Union University Women's Basketball Team on winning the NAIA Division 1 National Championship.

WHEREAS, with poise, determination and exceptional skill, the 1997-1998 Union University women's basketball team has clearly demonstrated its basketball superiority by capturing the prestigious NAIA Division 1 National Championship; and

WHEREAS, the Lady Bulldogs captured the regular season TranSouth Conference title and then won the TranSouth Conference Tournament in convincing fashion with victories over David Lipscomb 71-57, Berry 82-61 and Freed-Hardeman 82-57; and

WHEREAS, in the opening rounds of the NAIA Division 1 National Championship Tournament, Union defeated Pikeville, Kentucky 78-51; Montana State Northern 76-63, Oklahoma Baptist 99-92 in a thrilling come-from-behind, double-overtime victory; and Findlay, Ohio 80-64 to advance to their second straight title game; and

WHEREAS, in the championship contest, the Lady Bulldogs defeated traditional power Southern Nazarene of Bethany, Oklahoma that had won the previous four national titles; and

WHEREAS, Union's exciting 73-70 victory over the highly regarded and four-time national champion enabled the Lady Bulldogs to capture its first NAIA National title; and

WHEREAS, the Lady Bulldogs finished their memorable season with a 35-3 overall record, an enviable winning percentage of .920; and

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WHEREAS, the Lady Bulldogs with five sophomores and four freshmen played with maturity and poise rarely shown by more experienced squads; and

WHEREAS, in his sixteenth and final season as the sole Head Coach of the Union University women's basketball team, Coach David Blackstock took the team to the national tournament for the ninth time in 11 years, reaching the title game three times. His outstanding overall record is 478-84, a winning percentage of .850, the highest winning percentage of any active NAIA coach; and

WHEREAS, Coach Blackstock was deservedly selected as the 1998 National Coach of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Coach Blackstock's staff included Assistant Coach Anna Richardson, a former Union Lady Bulldog star player; Assistant Coach Heather Campbell, a former two-time NAIA National Championship All-Tournament team member; and Trainer Robert Stiegmann, a Jackson native who is affiliated with sports Plus Rehab Centers; and

WHEREAS, the team leaders were sophomore center, Celeste Gholston, one of a select group of players named to the prestigious Kodak NAIA College Women's All-American basketball team and the NAIA National Championship All-Tournament first team; sophomore post player, Rose Agnounge, who averaged 16.6 points and 5.5 rebounds during tournament play and was chosen second team All-TranSouth Conference and NAIA National Championship Tournament Most Valuable Player; sophomore guard, Meg Griffin, an NAIA National Championship All-Tournament first team selection; and freshman guard, April Pearson, who tied a National Tournament record with nine steals in a single game and received the National Tournament Hustle Award; and

WHEREAS, the other members of this talented team were sophomore forward, Leslie Henderson, sophomore guard, Lori Love; freshman post player, Ginger Bryant, freshman forward, Carlyne Sagasi, freshman guard, Amy Grace; and freshman guard, Alisha Lehmkuhl; and

WHEREAS, the hard-working managers were Jenny Hollowell and Kristina Lockett; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to specially recognize this marvelous team on their numerous accomplishments; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and congratulate Head Coach David Blackstock and the 1997-1998 Union University women's basketball team on winning the coveted NAIA Division 1 National Championship and extend our best wishes to each team member for every continued success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the school and to each person named above, with this final clause omitted from such copies.